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ABSTRACT

This final report discusses the outcomes of a project designed to promote higher standards for Sign Language interpreter preparations programs and to provide an opportunity for such programs to engage in self-examination. The project field-tested a set of program standards and a program self-study process with five Sign Language interpreter programs, and trained nine raters to score program applications. The project found that programs are eager for this type of programmatic feedback and wanted to know whether they "passed" the evaluation. Many qualified people expressed interest in participating in the rating and scoring process. The raters who completed training and participated in the field-test were found to have addressed the task with integrity, commitment, and insight. However, the scoring process was found to be structured so that it was difficult to interpret the data collected in any meaningful way. The report includes a program assessment, a description of the process of field-testing the interpreter education endorsement, and the program standards and evaluation forms. Contains 13 references. (CR)

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COVER SHEET

Grantee Organization:

CONFERENCE OF INTERPRETER TRAINERS
9520 Reseda Blvd., #212
Northridge, CA 91324

Grant Number:

P116 B90982-90

Project Dates:

Starting Date: 15 October 1989
Ending Date: 14 October 1991
Number of Months: 24

Project Director:

Marina L. McIntire
9420 Reseda Blvd., #212
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FIPSE Program Officer: Sandra Newkirk

Grant Award:		
	Year 1	$30,641
	Year 2	$35,053
	Total	**$65,694**

EC 306010

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The ultimate goal of this project has been to promote higher standards for Sign Language interpreter preparation programs and to provide an opportunity for such programs to engage in self-examination. We have field-tested a set of program standards and a program self-study process with five Sign Language interpreter programs, and have trained nine raters to score program applications. The application provides a tool for the analysis of curricular and programmatic strengths and weaknesses necessary for appropriate growth and improvement. As the result of our activities, we have have re-assessed, re-defined, and re-evaluated program criteria to meet the needs of the profession and our consumers. Secondarily, this package provides standards and offers guidance for the development of new programs in interpretation/transliteration.

Conference of Interpreter Trainers
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Standards for Sign Language Interpreter Programs

Project title:

Implementation of a National Endorsement System for Interpreter Preparation Progams

Grantee Organization:

CONFERENCE OF INTERPRETER TRAINERS
9420 Reseda Blvd., #212
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Project Director:

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A. Project overview: As a result of social changes in the last thirty years, D/deaf people have come to expect and demand more and higher quality of interpreting services. Federal and state laws have been enacted that support their expectations and have exacerbated the severe need for qualified interpreters. The Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) have assumed the responsibility for establishing higher standards for the education of new Sign Language interpreters.

In pursuing that goal, the CIT prepared a set of program standards and developed an application process by which programs could measure themselves against those standards. We trained nine raters to score program applications and recruited five programs to serve as field test sites. As a result of these activities, we have changed the format and the scoring of the standards. We remain committed to these improvements in the education of new interpreters and we believe that the field is now seriously committed to participating in this process.

B. Purpose: The problem that we originally addressed remains: the critical need for establishing national standards and criteria for the assessment of interpreter preparation programs (IPP's). The education of Sign Language interpreters is insufficient and inadequate to the needs of D/deaf citizens and of the interpreters themselves. Programs have been instituted without the benefit of articulated or recognized standards, and students and faculty have to deal with a tremendous diversity in program philosophy, quality, structure, and goals. The result is lack of consistency in the linguistic skills, knowledge, and attitudes of program graduates. This, in turn, has serious implications for the American Deaf Community.

A secondary problem comes from the fact that the standards are very high. Occasionally, programs and faculty shy away from or become defensive about self-study. They want to know about "passing" grades or ratings, and they are angry if they feel attacked. This, of course, is a quite natural response, and we are working at resolving this issue.

C. Background and origins: Since 1965, approximately seventy-five programs have been established to teach American Sign Language and the process of interpretation between Sign Language and English. Professionals in the field of interpretation and interpreter education have long since recognized the critical need for standards for interpreter preparation programs (IPP's). Initial efforts to establish standards and guidelines for the establishment and management of IPP's began by the RID in 1978. By 1980, the CIT had identified the need for program standards as a priority and began an exhaustive effort to review and revise the RID-generated document. After a number of revisions and attempts to develop a working system, the CIT and the RID joined energies and established a joint committee in 1984. The joint committee has been maintained since that time, although the committee membership has changed from time to time.

The joint committee developed a more formalized and comprehensive set of proposed standards and associated guidelines, and distributed the documents to a wide number of individuals in the professional community and to educational institutions for review and critique. This critique phase led to additional revisions, and the resulting package, referred to as the CIT/RID EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ENDORSEMENT SYSTEM, was subsequently approved by the membership of CIT and the Boards of the CIT and RID in 1987-88. Implementation of the program, however, required funding. Towards this end, select

individuals from the CIT submitted a grant proposal to the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE).

D. Project Descriptions: In proceeding with this project, we had to refine and revise the package. The package itself contained originally contained an incipient application form from which standards could be inferred. We extracted standards and established guidelines for completing the application form. We also wrote a set of goals and benefits of the package, as follows:

§ to offer a clear-eyed view of programmatic strengths and weaknesses
§ to provide assistance in improving programs' structure and curricula
§ to ensure that programs can eventually offer students the best possible educational experience.
§ to encourage programs to bring exiting students up to a minimum standard
§ to ameliorate existing programmatic weaknesses in the general level of education available now to interpreting students.

We began by developing raters' scoring forms which would allow raters to work independently in applying the standards. The field-test itself consisted of nine raters assessing the applications of five programs. (In the proposal, we committed to four programs, but we determined that doing five would not cost more and would give us a broader sample.) First, we selected test sites. This entailed the development of required program characteristics; we then invited and reviewed applications and selected test sites: Los Angeles Pierce College (Woodland Hills, CA); The National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Rochester, NY); Northcentral Technical Institute (Waubonsee, WI); Tulsa Junior College (Tulsa, OK); University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI)

Similarly we developed standards for screening and selecting raters. We invited and reviewed applications, and selected nine raters. In October 1990, we trained raters, using a curriculum and case studies developed by the committee. We also developed evaluation procedures for assessing the package and the process. We prepared and sent the application to the five test sites, as well as student and graduate questionnaires. The latter were sent in January 1991. Recipients had one month to respond. We had a 67% response rate.

In March 1991, raters met in Washington, D.C. to score the applications and to evaluate the process. We announced the field-test results in May, at the same time soliciting comments and evaluations from raters and from test sites.

E. Project results: We have gathered comments, critique, and evaluations from several sources: the field-test sites, the raters (both formally and informally), and external consultants. The Committee has gleaned from these diverse perspectives several object lessons and have gathered inspiration for further revisions to the package and the process.

In terms of programs and the field in general, we have learned several things. First, programs are eager for this type of programmatic feedback. We experienced, for example, no difficulty in finding sites that were willing to participate in the initial trial of the package. Secondly, programs want varying levels of feedback. One dissatisfying, yet unsurprising aspect of this interest is that programs want to know whether they have "passed" the evaluation. Programs also, quite rightfully, want to know what will happen with the scoring information.

As to raters and the scoring process, many highly qualified people expressed interest in participating. The raters who completed training and participated in this field-test have addressed the task with a remarkable degree of integrity, commitment, and insight. The scoring process, on the other hand, has been structured in such a way that we find it difficult to interpret the data we collected in any meaningful way.

As a result, we have come to the observation that the standards, as they were stated, "over-articulate" the ideal we seek. This has led to a cumbersome system which did not always yield the desired data or information. We have reviewed the package and distinguished between the actual standards and items which serve as indicators of those standards. In fact, we have taken a step back and made a distinction that has not been clear over the last few years -- between endorsement and program self-study. Obviously, the process has been evolving,

and we foresee that it will continue to evolve. The standards reflect an ideal vision for the field. Such an ideal requires a transitional period in which we can manage the necessary growth and improvement.

While this transitional period will be one of painful growth, the process is a valuable one for the field, and our view is that it is imperative that we continue the experience. As a result of our work, we have made several recommendations to the CIT and RID Boards. First, we have suggested certain revisions to the application form and process:

- § to eliminate the institution section and restrict our rating activities to institutions which have received regional accreditation;
- § to re-organize the information into a more logical sequence;
- § to condense the amount of information by utilizing a more generalized system of standards;
- § to strengthen the student portfolio segment of the application by developing a systematic approach to gathering a standard set of data;
- § to develop stimulus material for gathering information relating to student standards;
- § to strengthen the use of graduate and student feedback by asking more explicit questions.

Second, we have suggested revisions to the rating system:

- § to determine the function of the rating process and to assign either a descriptive or a numerical system, or some combination of the two in order to address this function;
- § to re-train raters in the use of the new form and in assessing the new student portfolio;
- § to develop a system of descriptors and narrative options which can be used to provide individual feedback in some standard format.

Third, we are seeking to facilitate the transition towards our idealized vision of the field. We wish to see the following take place:

- § the publication of articles in various educational journals, seeking response from the broader academic community; these articles would be about the package and our experience with establishing standards;
- § the development of a position paper on competency-based curriculum;
- § the development of a model of the organization of curriculum, which would assist in programs' self-assessment process.

Finally, we have urged the Boards to plan for continued implementation of the package. We hope to see three sites go through self-study in 1992, six to ten in 1993, and six to ten more in 1994. We hope that the process will become self-supporting through the use of an "assessment fee." We have urged the Boards to establish management systems (policies and procedures, reporting mechanisms for any staff, and budgeting) to make the process as independent as possible.

F. Summary and conclusions: We believe that the field is ready for programmatic self-assessment and will respond eagerly to this opportunity. Such a process will cost money and requires a plan. The Committee will prepare a five-year plan to leave in the hands of its successor Committee; such a plan should foster continuity and consistency in the evolution of this process.

The immediate prospect is one of "self-assessment" for programs, with the eventual long-term goal of accreditation. We know that articulated standards provide for more well-developed programs with coherent curricula. These in turn will mean quality control and more competent graduates to serve the communication needs in the Deaf Community for the century to come.

A. Project Overview: Since the mid-1960's, wide-ranging political, social and educational changes have taken place in the lives of American deaf people. As a result, the need for competent, professional interpreter practitioners has increased. In response to this need, educational programs, funded by the federal government and by various post-secondary institutions, were established. Since 1965, approximately seventy-five programs have been established to teach American Sign Language and the process of interpretation between Sign Language and English. Since these programs have been instituted without the benefit of articulated or recognized standards, students and faculty have to deal with a tremendous diversity in program philosophy, quality, structure, and goals. The result is lack of consistency in the linguistic skills, knowledge, and attitudes of program graduates. This, in turn, has serious implications for the American Deaf Community.

In an effort to face the need for standards in such programs, the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT), in cooperation with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), prepared a set of standards and received funding from FIPSE to field-test these standards. This entailed the following activities:

refining and revising the package;
developing scoring forms;
developing evaluation procedures for process and the package;
selecting test sites;
selecting and training raters;
sending questionnaires to students and recent graduates of the five test-sites;
supervising the scoring of the test-sites;
gathering comments and evaluations from raters and test-sites; and
revising the application form and the application process.

We have been in contact with 150 students and graduates of programs, and consulted extensively with the faculty and staff of the five test-sites. The nine raters have offered considerable comments towards the ultimate format of the package.

We have urged the Boards of CIT and RID to plan for continued implementation of the package. We hope to see three sites go through self-study in 1992, six to ten in 1993, and six to ten more in 1994. We hope that the process will become self-supporting through the use of an "assessment fee." We have also urged the Boards to establish management systems (policies and procedures, reporting mechanisms for any staff, and budgeting) to make the process as independent and self-generating as possible.

B. Purpose: The Committee has served during the past two years (1989 - 1991) and has focused specifically on the implementation of the FIPSE grant. A project coordinator has served as the facilitator and staff liaison for RID, CIT, FIPSE, and the committee. The charge to the committee under the grant was three-fold:

1. review and revise the CIT/RID Educational Standards Endorsement System package and prepare it for distribution during a field-test period;
2. conduct a field-test of the system and analyze and evaluate the results; and
3. report the results of the field-testing and make recommendations regarding implementation of the system to the boards and memberships of the CIT and RID.

One issue facing the Committee and the field in general has been that we are demanding much of ourselves by establishing these standards. It is one thing to say we ought to have standards; it is quite another for programs to voluntarily submit themselves to the process of self-study. This was especially true since at the beginning of the granting period, we still planned to make results of any evaluation a matter of public record. Because of our activities during the grant, we have reviewed our long-term and immediate goals and have determined that it will take us longer than we expected to accomplish what we wish. One dissatisfying, yet unsurprising discovery has been that programs want to know whether they have "passed" the evaluation. Programs also, quite rightfully, want to know what will happen with the scoring information. Programs also have exhibited some anxiety and some defensiveness about feedback and results. Also, some raters have demonstrated a degree of reluctance about their abilities to judge programs.

We should have been more meticulous about clarifying our immediate goals to programs: that we were "testing" the package and not the programs *per se*. These concerns have been ironed out for the present. It remains to be seen, however, how programs will cope with the notion of accreditation -- a long-term goal. For now, however, we see that it is crucial we help programs engage in a diagnostic process, with considerable emphasis on self-study, and less attention paid to numbers and scores. As for raters, we need to take considerable care that they feel confident and capable and that the package will, in fact, speak for itself.

The project, in the opinion of this committee, needs continued support for at least one more cycle of testing, to ensure that the revised package is an effective one. Raters need additional training and the package calls for additional materials (student assessments). With further and broader exposure, this package has the potential to change the field radically in the direction to which we have begun to proceed.

C. Background and origins: In the 1960's, three trends or events took shape and have affected this project. First were the changes in the U.S. relating to general societal recognition of minority rights and the notion of cultural diversity as a positive social characteristic. By suggesting a different viewpoint of the Deaf experience -- cultural rather than pathological, these sociopolitical changes have influenced and continue to influence D/deaf people's experience of society, as well as *vice versa*.

The second major influence was the publication of Stokoe's (1960, 1965) ground-breaking claims regarding American Sign Language. For the first time, American Sign Language was regarded as a fully-formed language that had a syntax, a morphology, its own "phonology" -- in short, a grammar. The impact of these claims were huge, indeed, and they continue to have an influence on the rising social consciousness of the Deaf Community into the 1990's.

A third event was the establishment of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf in 1965. This was a first step towards the professionalization of the task of interpreting between D/deaf and hearing people. Along with the RID, sign language classes and interpreting classes started to be offered in more formal settings than ever before, as colleges and universities began to recognize both linguistic claims about ASL and political claims regarding the rights of D/deaf people to equal access.

From these seeds came the roots of the present project. The RID grew from a "grassroots" organization into a professional association. Federal legislation (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and P.L. 94-142) put "teeth" into equal rights accessibility for D/deaf citizens. Both the hearing and the Deaf communities began to recognize the severe shortage of qualified interpreters. Federal funding supported ten centers for short-term education of interpreters and more programs appeared in a number of colleges and universities.

Professionals in the field of interpretation and interpreter education have long since recognized the critical need for establishing national standards and criteria for the assessment of interpreter preparation programs (IPP's). Initial efforts to establish standards and guidelines for the establishment and management of IPPs began by the RID in 1978. (The current membership of RID, a professional membership association, is approximately 4,500.) An RID committee generated a document entitled RID Accreditation Standards for Interpreter Training Programs; this document delineated a set of proposed standards. The following year, the CIT was established to address the needs and interests of interpreter educators nationwide. By 1980, the CIT (membership hovers between 150 and 200) had identified the need for program standards as a priority and began an exhaustive effort to review and revise the RID-generated document. After a number of revisions and attempts to develop a working system, the CIT and the RID joined energies and established a joint committee in 1984. The joint

committee has been maintained since that time, although the committee membership has been changed occasionally.

The joint committee developed a more formalized and comprehensive set of proposed standards and associated guidelines, and distributed the documents to a wide number of individuals in the professional community and to educational institutions for review and critique. This critique phase led to additional revisions, and the resulting package, referred to as the CIT/RID Educational Standards Endorsement System, was subsequently approved by the membership of CIT and the Boards of the CIT and RID in 1987-88. Implementation of the program, however, required funding. Towards this end, select individuals from the CIT submitted a grant proposal to the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) during the fall of 1988.

In 1989, FIPSE awarded CIT an initial grant of $30,641 for the first year of a pilot study. A second year award of $35,053 provides for completion of the pilot study. The goals of the FIPSE grant have been to field-test, evaluate, revise and ultimately implement the Endorsement System.

D. Project Description: Addressing our charges required that we develop a comprehensive plan of work to enable the committee to complete both the grant requirements and the organizational charge. To begin the process, the committee developed a philosophical framework which would guide our work. The framework was drawn from the countless hours of discussion with CIT and RID boards and membership, the work of previous committee members and sensitivity to the current "state of the art". We established the following framework of goals for the Committee to follow:

- § to offer a clear-eyed view of programmatic strengths and weaknesses
- § to provide assistance in improving programs' structure and curricula
- § to ensure that programs can eventually offer students the best possible educational experience.
- § to encourage programs to bring exiting students up to a minimum standard
- § to ameliorate existing programmatic weaknesses in the general level of education available now to interpreting students.

For the period of the field-test, the package was organized in the following format: programs were to be questioned and measured in the areas of institution, program, faculty and curriculum. Questions ranged from the global ("Include a budget for your program.") to the minute ("Indicate the number of audio tapes your program owns."). The application was intended to be thorough and examined virtually every aspect of the program, including community support, and graduate and student feedback.

The FIPSE grant, awarded in 1989, has lasted for two years. The granting period ended October 14, 1991. In the two years, the CIT/RID Committee on Educational Standards had three primary responsibilities:

1. review and revise the CIT/RID Educational Standards Endorsement System package and prepare it for distribution during a field-test period;
2. conduct a field-test of the system and analyze and evaluate the results; and
3. report the results of the field-testing and make recommendations regarding implementation of the system to the boards and memberships of the CIT and RID.

In undertaking these tasks, we have produced succeeding revised versions of the package. While maintaining the spirit of the standards as approved in 1986, we have gone through several changes in how to measure a program's status against those standards.

In preparing for the field-test, we had to select raters and field-test sites. We established the following criteria for selecting raters:

1. Raters must have been a member of RID for at least three years.
2. Raters must have been a member of CIT for at least three years.
3. Raters must have a Bachelor's degree.
4. Raters should have a Master's degree.
5. Raters should hold valid and current RID certification.
6. Raters must have at least three years programmatic and/or teaching experience in an interpreter preparation program at a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
7. Raters must submit: 1) one letter of recommendation from a colleague, attesting to their commitment to the goals of educational standards as established by this Committee, and 2) a current resumé.

We notified potential raters through announcements in the CIT and RID newsletters, and we sent personal letters to every member of CIT (at that time, approximately 125). Twenty-five people submitted initial applications. These were screened and we sent a mini-case study for them to appraise. Eleven applicants completed an assessment of the imaginary institution, and based on that preliminary piece of work, the Committee selected nine people to be trained as raters. They are: Cathy Cogen (MA), Dr. Nancy Frishberg (CT), Sally Koziar (IL), Christine Monikowski (NM), Mary Mooney (TX), Pat Stawasz (CT), Laurie Swabey (MN), Betsy Winston (DC), and Dr. Sherman Wilcox (NM).

These raters came to California State University, Northridge, for four days prior to the 1990 CIT convention and the Committee trained them in using and applying the package standards and rating forms. The National Center on Deafness (CSUN) provided us with free

meeting space for this training period. The Committee had developed a curriculum and produced three case study programs, including faculty and curriculum. As a result of the training, the raters offered valuable insights and comments on how to improve the scoring process and the application itself. Their scoring behaviors were assessed carefully, and all nine candidates passed the training.

In the meantime, the Committee also recruited field-test sites. Our criteria for these were:

1. Sites selected should represent a sampling of programs offered by institutions which offer Associate, Baccalureate or Master's degrees.

GUIDELINE: should be proportionate to the total number of degree-granting programs in the same category.

2. Program must have been established for a minimum of five academic years.
3. Program should have a minimum of thirty graduates to date.
4. Selected sites should represent both urban and rural locations.

GUIDELINE: target programs that will graduate individuals serving a predominantly rural or urban consumer base.

5. Selected sites represent a wide geographic distribution.

GUIDELINE: attempt to target at least one program on East Coast, West Coast, Southeast and Midwest.

6. Selected sites should serve D/deaf students on campus.
7. Selected sites must have at least one staff member with full-time faculty status.
8. Selected sites must have the capacity to produce a videotape of instructional activities occurring in the language lab and which address specific criteria.
9. Selected sites should include one program with an interpretation focus and one program with a transliteration focus.
10. Selected sites must submit five (5) letters of support from local organizations and agencies, college deans and administrators, faculty and students.

GUIDELINE: letters to reflect the cooperation between the program and the recommending entity, the commitment to support the endorsement process.

11. Selected sites must have a representative at the 1990 CIT Convention in Pomona, to participate in discussions related to the application process.
12. Selected sites will agree that data collected from the application process can be used to advance the field of interpreter education. (For example, data may be used in professional articles, reporting of research, the search for funds to continue the endorsement process, and other similar endeavors.)

Again, the Committee contacted programs through the CIT and RID newsletters. As well, we sent personal inquiries to all programs listed in the CIT Program Directory. Fourteen sites made an initial application and the Committee made its selections, based on our goal of programmatic and geographic balance. The selected sites were:

1. Los Angeles Pierce College (Woodland Hills, CA)
2. National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Rochester, NY)
3. Northcentral Technical Institute (Waubonsee, WI)
4. Tulsa Junior College (Tulsa, OK)
5. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI)

Representatives from these sites participated in a group meeting during the 1990 CIT Convention where the details of the field test process were explained. Early in November of 1990, each program received a copy of the application materials to complete and return by the beginning of February, 1991.

The nine raters and three Committee members met over a long weekend in Washington, D.C., in March 1991. Having worked with two applications prior to arriving, they were to have made preliminary scoring decisions alone; they then worked together in teams, trying always to understand clearly what the standards intended and how they should be applied. Each rater also took a third program application home to score. This third set of scores served as Committee data for checking reliability among raters.

Raters' behaviors were extremely reliable in three areas: institution, program, and faculty. Curriculum scores, however, remained noticeably variable and raters expressed their dissatisfaction with this particular section. Overall, the programs' experiences and raters' scoring confirmed our suspicions about a number of things. Among these were the generally poor status of programs' curricula, the relatively high standing of institutions, and the need for changes in the focus of the package.

E. Project Results: We have gathered comments, critique, and evaluations from several sources: the field-test sites, the raters (both formally and informally), and external consultants. The Committee has gleaned from these diverse perspectives several object lessons and have received inspiration for further revisions to the package and the process.

In terms of programs and the field in general, we have learned several things. First, programs are eager for this type of programmatic feedback. We experienced, for example, no difficulty in finding sites that were willing to participate in the initial trial of the package. Secondly, programs want varying levels of feedback, and often demonstrated concern about "passing" the evaluation.

As to raters and the scoring process, many highly qualified people expressed interest in participating. The raters who completed training and participated in this field-test have addressed the task with a remarkable degree of integrity, commitment, and insight. The scoring process, on the other hand, has been structured in such a way that we find it difficult to interpret the data we collected in any meaningful way.

As a result, we have come to the observation that the standards, as they were stated, "over-articulate" the ideal we seek. This has led to a cumbersome system which did not always yield the desired data or information. We have since reviewed and then distinguished between the actual standards and items which would serve as indicators of those standards. In fact, we have taken a step back and made a distinction that has not been clear over the last few years -- between endorsement and program self-study. Obviously, the process has been evolving, and we foresee that it will continue to evolve. The standards reflect an ideal vision for the field. Such an ideal requires a transitional period in which we can manage the necessary growth and improvement.

E. Summary and Conclusions: While this transitional period will be one of difficult growth, the process is a valuable one for the field, and our view is that it is imperative that we continue the experience. As a result of our work, we have made several recommendations to the CIT and RID Boards. First, we have suggested certain revisions to the application form and process:

- § to eliminate the institution section of the package and restrict our rating activities to institutions which hold regional accreditation;
- § to re-organize the information into a more logical sequence;
- § to condense the amount of information by utilizing a more generalized system of standards;
- § to strengthen the student portfolio segment of the application by developing a systematic approach to gathering a standard set of data;
- § to develop stimulus material for gathering information relating to student standards;
- § to strengthen the use of graduate and student feedback by asking more explicit questions.

Second, we have suggested revisions to the rating system:

- § to determine the function of the rating process and to assign either a descriptive or a numerical system, or some combination of the two in order to address this function;
- § to re-train raters in the use of the new form and in assessing the new student portfolio;
- § to develop a system of descriptors and narrative options which can be used to provide individual feedback in some standard format.

Third, we are seeking to facilitate the transition towards our idealized vision of the field. We wish to see the following take place:

- § the publication of articles in various educational journals, seeking response from the broader academic community; these articles would be about the package and our experience with establishing standards;
- § the development of a position paper on competency-based curriculum;
- § the development of a model of the organization of curriculum, which would assist in programs' self-assessment process.

Finally, we have urged the CIT and RID Boards to plan for continued implementation of the package. We hope to see three sites go through self-study in 1992, six to ten in 1993, and six to ten more in 1994. We hope that the process will become self-supporting through the use of an "assessment fee." We have urged the Boards to establish management systems (policies and procedures, reporting mechanisms for any staff, and budgeting) to make the process as independent as possible.

We believe that the field is ready for programmatic self-assessment and will respond eagerly to this opportunity. Such a process will cost money and requires a plan. The Committee has prepared a five-year plan to leave in the hands of its successor Committee; such a plan should foster continuity and consistency in the evolution of this process. In addition, the Committee has prepared a tentative revision of the package itself, reflecting the comments and evaluations of students, programs, and raters. These revisions will ensure a smooth transition to the new Committee and a positive outlook for the continued life of the package.

The immediate prospect is one of "self-assessment" for programs, with the eventual long-term goal of accreditation. We know that articulated standards provide for more well-developed programs with coherent curricula. These in turn will mean quality control and more competent graduates to serve the communication needs in the Deaf Community for the century to come.

G. Appendices: Without the financial support we received from FIPSE, this project quite simply would not have gone forward. We might have stumbled through a very pale imitation of field-testing, but in no way could we, in two years, have accomplished the goals and learned the lessons that have come to us in this critical period for interpreter education. In particular, the Project Director's meeting in 1989 was extremely helpful; even though this project and the CIT are so different in nature from the majority of FIPSE-sponsored projects, the offerings at that meeting were highly instructive and influential in the shaping of our work. (The P.D. was kept from attending in 1990 by personal pressures.)

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT:
A PROGRESS REPORT TO THE ORGANIZATION

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CIT/RID Ad Hoc Committee on Educational Standards

This report represents the "state of the art" of the CIT/RID Program Assessment Package, at the time of the 1990 Convention.
For a more current view, please refer to the RID Proceedings for the 1991 RID Convention.

An historical perspective may be a bit over-blown for an organization as young as ours. But if we ignore this perspective now, later — when we wish to have the knowledge — we will have forgotten it. This is the appropriate time to take the opportunity to know what happened, and to put at least a preliminary interpretation on it.

It would be both easy and tempting to view the program assessment package as something imposed externally. Some may believe that it was developed by an elite of CIT or by a mere handful of interpreter educators, who might "have it in" for smaller programs. It may seem to others that this project just appeared "out of thin air." Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Throughout the brief history of CIT, program assessment has been at the forefront of our agenda, and literally dozens of CIT members have had a direct hand in shaping the present package. In 1979, at the first meeting of CIT, our founding mothers were prompt in identifying program standards as an issue which they should appropriate address. RID had already made a first pass at some program standards in the late 1970's, but these did not generate any means for implementation. Anna Witter-Merithew was involved in that first effort. In 1980, in response to a request from Jan Kanda, the first CIT President, Anna developed a preliminary application, drawing from the RID documents. In 1981, Mary Stotler took on the project. Her committee were: Theresa Smith, Judie Husted, Sharon Neumann Solow, Mark Hoshi, Doug Baynton, and Maddy Hartwell. The following year, Mary requested responses to her draft from all CIT members. Many of us can remember receiving the request. Many of us were not being terribly clear about what it was all about, but we dutifully filled out a comment sheet and returned it.

In 1983, Cathy Cogen was made Chair of a joint CIT/RID Committee. This was the first time the two organizations had officially collaborated on anything. The Committee at that time included Susan Arneson, Rick Hernandez and Betty Colonomos. In the summer of 1986, while Marina McIntire was Vice-President of CIT, Jan — then President of CIT — asked her to become co-chair of the committee. At the same time, Dennis Cokely (then President of RID) appointed Gary Mowl as the second co-chair.

The Committee at that time included Susan, Rick, Betty, Gary, and Anna Witter-Merithew. McIntire took the response forms from Cathy and the committee made a preliminary revision of the package, incorporating some of our own ideas and comments. We then passed it around for critique to several people in the field,

including Jenna Cassell, Bonnie Sherwood, Darlene Allen, Gary Sanderson, Caroline Preston, Bob Alcorn, Marty Barnum, Bonnie Dubienski, Don Renzulli, Eve West, Phyllis Wilcox, Marilyn Tousignant, and Theresa Smith. Some of these people were "free-lancers" and others were heads of well-established programs. Second and third revisions went back to those arbitrarily chosen folks and to the heads of each of the federally-funded programs: Lindsey Antle, Laurie Swabey, Carol Patrie, Bill Woodrick, Paula Sargent, Robert Baker, Bern Jones, Myra Taff-Watson, and Amos Sales. Comments and criticisms flowed back and Gary and Marina did their best to accommodate everyone.

At the 1986 Convention, the CIT Board haggled and hassled over the structure and nature of the package. Finally, we presented it to the CIT membership for approval, which was granted with some minor revisions. A few months later, the RID Board also approved the package. Lindsey Antle became Chair of the Committee, and it then included Anna, Jan, Charlotte Baker-Shenk, Linda Siple, Jona Maiorano, and Eve Dicker. In time, Marina again accepted the responsibility of being the chair of this committee. Betty, Jan, and Anna did a little shuffle and Charlotte started her family. Eve West stepped onto the Committee and here we are!

In the meantime, Jan Kanda and Charlotte Baker-Shenk had written a preliminary draft of a grant proposal to FIPSE, asking for funds to support a field-test of the package. They asked Marina to take a look at it, and the three of them completed a first-round application in October 1988. FIPSE approved it in January 1989 for the second round of applications. The three of us buckled down once again, with some help from our friends, and we were successful in getting the funding which began in October 1989.

Next week [October 1990], we begin our second funding year. In the roughly nine years since CIT began this collaborative project with RID, it has been in the hands of at least one hundred and fifty various CIT members, each of whom has had the opportunity to shape it. Now we face the acid test, the actual piloting of the package. Five programs — two-year, four-year, urban, and rural — will take our "baby" in hand and we will find out whether this plethora of moms and dads have produced a viable package. The raters will meet in March of 1991, and the Joint Committee on Educational Standards will at the same time be collecting comments and criticisms from all participants in the process. That means a lot more people will critique and shape both the package and the process. In August 1991, in Washington, D.C., the CIT and RID Boards will deal with proposed revisions of the package and with the issue of funding. At that time, we may have a clearer answer as to whether and how the package will work for all of us. Our deep belief is that it will work and that it will work well.

Someone recently asked whether we could have done this more quickly if we had had funding at the beginning. After a moment, it became clear that it has been a real benefit to us to have struggled all these years. If funding had been available in 1981 or 1982, we would have pushed ourselves to meet deadlines. We could not

have allowed either the concept or the nature of the package to "seep" into the consciousness of the organization. As it stands now, each CIT member "owns" this package in a very real way. It is the result of a genuinely democratic process, in which we all participated in bringing this project to reality. We have something to be proud of, something that can now be used as a model for other organizations — both the package itself and the process of development.

Rationale and Goals for the Endorsement Process

At the present time there are approximately 63 programs that teach the process of interpretation between Sign Language and English in the United States. Generally they categorize themselves as "Sign Language Studies," "Interpreter Training," "Interpreter Preparation" or "Interpreter Education" programs. For the most part they have been established in post-secondary institutions throughout the country.

The number of programs has increased by leaps and bounds since the establishment of the first interpreting classes and programs some 25 years ago. With this increase came a tremendous diversity in the quality of instruction, program structure, overall goals and objectives as well as the resultant student experiences.

For more than ten years, national leaders in the fields of interpretation and interpreter education have recognized a critical need to establish national standards and criteria in order to assess the quality of the interpreter preparation programs. The national endorsement system that is now addressing this need has been assembled by a joint committee of two national organizations representing interpreter educators and interpreters themselves, namely CIT and RID.

The proposal funded by FIPSE acknowledged the existence of such an assessment package containing the standards our field wanted to satisfy in the long run. The objectives of the proposal are: 1) to field test the assessment package; 2) to evaluate and modify the package; and 3) to activate the package and to make it financially self sustaining. Further, it was proposed that a six-member committee be established and that these members, along with the Project Director, meet over a period of two years, train nine raters, supervise the field testing, evaluate the process and make revisions, and finally make recommendations to the CIT and RID Boards regarding the transition to a permanent endorsement process. This is no small task.

The funding of the proposal and the establishment of the process represents a major step for our profession. It will mean improved educational experiences for hundreds of students and interpretation services for Deaf Americans. The rationale of this package is sound. Any profession should be willing to put its training to the test. The standards are lofty but not unachievable. The package will help us as a profession to assess where we are and what we need to do in order to move into the future. Therefore, the primary goal of the package is a self examination to help us assess our strengths and weaknesses.

In addition, we will be encouraging high standards for interpretation and transliteration and fostering program development. Another goal is the hope that by talking together programs will develop a mutual respect for each other and will gain a wider respect for themselves within the greater academic community. This process is a healthy one. It will provide an indication as to how effective the self-examination was and will contribute to the data collection which must ultimately advance the field of interpreter education.

Overview of the Guidelines and Standards of the CIT/RID Endorsement Package

This overview of the standards and guidelines found within the CIT/RID endorsement process focuses on selected items described within the four components of the process — institution, program, faculty, and curriculum. Rater forms are used to assign scores for each section of the application. Scores are assigned on the basis of comparing the application to the established standards.

§ Institution. An institution seeking endorsement through the CIT/RID process gains endorsement recognition if it holds accreditation from an appropriate regional accrediting body. The applying programs will be examined from one of two points of focus: as four-year degree programs or as two-year or less degree programs.

A four-year program should award degrees on three levels: the bachelor's, master's, and doctorate. A two-year degree program will not be evaluated using the same criteria as a four-year degree program. There are undeniable benefits to be recognized in offering an interpretation program through a baccalaureate-awarding institution. However, certain criteria are distinguished between a four-year and a two-year school, such as normal teaching load or admissions criteria. It is important for interpreting programs seeking endorsement to realize that many of the standards and criteria used to evaluate either type of institute are separate and distinct.

There are many opportunities for either type of institution to 'shine' during the endorsement process. For example, any institution can provide a positive image in the form of ancillary student services, including job placement, counseling, academic remediation, student health availability, and the like. Evidence of policies reflecting the rectification of past inequities towards minorities and women, or efforts to make all facilities and services available to minority and disabled students, are examples of positive evaluation criteria. An institution which can give evidence of recognizing the value of having both faculty and students professionally involved in local, state, national, and international affairs, would be seen in a favorable light, regardless of whether it housed a four-year or two-year degree program.

In accordance to the standards put forth in the CIT/RID endorsement package, an institution giving evidence of an enlightened view of the linguistic status of American Sign Language, perhaps by offering credit toward graduation, or in its acceptance as a foreign or second language, would be recognized as being in the

forefront where both interpreter education and Deaf Community policies are concerned.

§ **Program**. As in the institution section, programs are also recognized as having varying criteria, depending upon whether they are four-year or two-year programs, and are evaluated accordingly. For example, two-year programs are not penalized for their institution's standard nomenclature for faculty positions.

A program's title is examined for evidence of preferred cultural identification with deafness, as opposed to a medical or pathological identification. The academic hierarchy should indicate that the program reports to an academic dean, instead of to handicapped services or support services. Secretarial help for the faculty should be in line with acceptable standards found in comparable non-interpreting programs. The name of the major, program degrees, and certificates of completion are evaluated under this program component to determine whether they reflect the nature and focus of the major.

Standard exit evaluations for competency in English, signed language, and interpretation or transliteration, show up in the evaluation of the program component. The number of students who enter, graduate, gain related jobs, and become certified, are noted. Programs in states without Quality Assurance evaluations are not penalized. Efforts to recruit and admit minority students, and a commitment in assisting them to graduate or successfully complete the program, are rewarded in this evaluative component.

A cohesive sequence of study and adequate practicum/internship experiences indicate a comprehensive and coherent set of learning experiences and provide the student with professional entry-level skills upon completion of the program. Sufficient contacts with members of the Deaf Community gives evidence of the program acting in tandem where mutual issues are concerned. Programs can offer proof of interaction through the involvement of students at political, social, and educational gatherings, both on and off campus.

Program support facilities in the form of secretarial and office support, photocopying, computer time, video and audio tape usage and dubbing, and library and laboratory facilities are considered essential to instruction enhancement. Because students' views are valued, opinions of both matriculating students and graduates of the program are requested in the form of confidential questionnaires. Letters of support from the academic community and the Deaf Community are read and evaluated also. In addition, the extent to which a program depends on "hard" or "soft" money for program funding sources has an impact on the evaluation outcome.

§ **Faculty.** The vitae of all full or part-time faculty are assessed according to a balance of strengths made available to the students. Of course, four-year and two-year degree program requirements are evaluated differently, with M.A., or M.Ed. degrees being sufficient for two-year degree programs, and the standards for four-

year degree programs preferring that the faculty hold Ph.D.'s or Ed.D.'s. A reasonable proportion of the faculty of either kind of program should be full-time or at least an tenure-line appointment. The long term commitment and stability of the faculty is considered if an institution does not offer tenure to any department on their campus.

Educational experience should have been garnered in relevant academic majors, with the faculty backgrounds varying according to a balanced set of views and academic biases. Faculty who attend professional conferences, conventions, and symposia are in a better position to exhibit their commitment to the profession. Publishing and presenting papers, leading and offering workshops, sharing knowledge and skills related to the profession all help to earn evaluation points in addition to demonstrating to the national community that the faculty is knowledgeable and up-to-date. Points are accrued for faculty members who hold certificates from relevant organizations, such as RID and SIGN. Membership in CIT and other professional related organizations bear witness to maintaining an interest in current issues in the field.

§ **Curriculum.** Possibly the most complex component to assess is the curriculum. All courses relevant to the major should be included in the scoring of the curriculum, and the progression of these courses should reflect the development of increasing knowledge, abilities, and skills of students as they pass through the program. Thus, much depends on the reliability of the raters to recognize quality course content. To ensure that an accurate assessment is made for courses offered through other departments, the raters will request all student handouts, a list of required and suggested readings, and the number of credit and contact hours for each course.

For each core course, media assignments, testing procedures, and instructional strategies are assessed. A unit-by-unit description and schedule of the class, with the number of days spent on each unit, and a content summary, will also be solicited and evaluated. The coherency of the material and whether or not the courses follow appropriate prerequisites will be examined. Evaluations should be able to determine the students' progress through the program, and the outlines should reflect an organized approach to the students' overall experience and education.

Site Selection

How did the Committee go about selecting field-test sites? In November of 1989, the CIT/RID Educational Standards committee met and established the following requirements for field-test sites:

1. Sites selected should represent a sampling of programs offered by institutions which offer Associate, Baccalaureate or Masters degrees.
Guideline: should be proportionate to the total number of degree granting-programs in the same category.

2. Program must have been established for a minimum of five academic years.

3. Program should have a minimum of thirty graduates to date.

4. Selected sites should represent both urban and rural locations.
Guideline: target programs that will graduate individuals serving a predominantly rural or urban consumer base.

5. Selected sites should represent a wide geographic distribution.
Guideline: attempt to target at least one program on East Coast, West Coast, Southeast and Midwest.

6. Selected sites should serve deaf students on campus.

7. Selected sites must have at least one staff member with full-time faculty status.

8. Selected sites must have the ability to create a videotape of instructional activities which occur in the language lab and which address specific criteria.

9. Selected sites should include one program with an interpretation focus and one program with a transliteration focus.

10. Selected sites must submit five (5) letters of support from local organizations and agencies, college deans and administrators, faculty and students.
Guideline: letters to reflect the cooperation between the program and the recommending entity, the commitment to support the endorsement process.

11. Selected sites must have a representative at the CIT Convention in California during October, 1990, to participate in training related to the application process.

12. Selected sites must agree that the data collected from the application process can be used to advance the field of education of interpretation.

The Committee followed the schedule below:

January 1990: Invitations and applications for field test site were sent to all programs listed in the CIT Directory, along with the criteria for selection.

March 15 1990: Deadline for field test site participation application. Fourteen programs responded.

June 4-6 CIT/RID Educational Standards Committee selected the following five programs as the ones which best satisfied the criteria:

National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Rochester, NY)
University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, WI)
Los Angeles Pierce College (CA)
Northcentral Technical College (Wausau, WI)
Tulsa Junior College (OK)

Rater Selection

In November 1989, the Committee met in Charlotte, NC, and established the qualifications of the review panel members, the application and the screening procedures and timelines. The qualifications we were looking for were:

-- RID member for three years
-- CIT member for three years
-- BA required, MA preferred
-- valid and current RID certification
-- three years teaching or programmatic experience in IPP in an accredited institution
-- letter of recommendation
-- resumé

In January, we sent letters of invitation to all CIT members, and all other known interpreter educators and institutions with programs. Also, we placed a rater selection announcement in RID Views. March 15 was the deadline for receiving rater applications. We received 35 applications and copies of all applications were distributed to a sub-committee to determine which ones satisfied the criteria. In April, we received from the sub-committee a list of applicants who were to receive case study – the second part of the application process. In May, we sent case studies to the twenty-four eligible applicants to be returned by May 25. Eleven applicants finished the case study. In June, we selected the nine candidates who would receive training and become raters: Laurie Swabey (Minnesota), Cathy Cogan (Massachusetts), Pat Stawasz (Connecticut), Elizabeth Winston (District of Columbia), Dr. Nancy Frishberg (Connecticut), Chris Monikowski (New Mexico), Sally Koziar (Illinois), Dr. Sherman Wilcox (New Mexico), and Mary Mooney (Texas).

Additionally, we sent letters of invitation to 13 candidates who originally applied to be raters, asking them to complete the case study and submit it for review. These persons, if selected, would be extended an invitation to participate in the training at their own expense. There were no responses.

How the Application Works

The case studies represented three simulated interpreter education programs which have applied for endorsement. The three programs are Longview State University (a four-year program), Horizon Community College (a two-year program), and the Valleyview Junior College program (a two-year, private college).

[In the presentation, we focussed on the philosophy statements, the sequence and types of coursework, faculty organization and qualifications, and discussed the ratings assigned by the rater candidates during training.]

The following is a listing of some of the considerations raters must address when rating individual applications:

1. Philosophy statements: Does the college recognize ASL as a language? Does the name of the program reflect an image-appropriate focus for a sign language interpreting major? Do the goals of the program reflect current trends in the field or interpreter education? Are students being prepared in an appropriate service?

2. Faculty organization and qualifications: Are the faculty members qualified to teach the coursework they are assigned? Are faculty members active in professional service and in continuing professional development? Are the faculty diverse in terms of skills and knowledge? Do the faculty have an adequate support system which provides opportunities for professional development, service and supervision?

3. Coursework: Are there an adequate number of courses to provide a balance between theory and practice of interpretation? Are students provided with ample opportunities for practice and feedback of interpreting and transliterating skills? Is the content of courses consistent with the statement of philosophy? Are students exposed to a variety of language and interpreter models? Are the practicum experiences sufficient to prepare students for the "real world"?

Why Program Assessment? A Perspective on Benefits

It is common practice for educational programs to be expected, even required to measure up to specific standards, especially programs of a specialized nature, i.e. nursing, early childhood education, human services. Following a similar practice will help to gain well-deserved recognition of the complex, academic rigor involved in interpreter preparation.

Embarking on the necessary self-analysis involved with completing the application offers an excellent barometer of what we are doing in our programs. It forces each program to take time to self-assess, look at itself, and introspect, which can only be positive. Recommendations from raters and the guidelines in the package could be used to lobby within your institutions for more resources, i.e. additional faculty, equipment, materials, space, smaller classes, recognition. Such efforts will appear less self-serving with documentation and feedback in hand.

The process of self-assessment needs the cooperation of all staff, faculty and administration. It creates an opportunity for the exchange of ideas, opinions and feelings about your program amongst those directly involved. Since all programs must plan for the future, the process of assessment forces us to look at where we have come from and to think about the future. With input from the rater responses future planning takes shape more easily, in compliance with a national standard.

Programs completing the application will receive feedback from knowledgeable, trained professionals in our field. The feedback will indicate strengths as well as areas for improvement, provide suggestions for modification, lend guidance for future directions. Most academic institutions periodically require their programs and curricula to go through an audit process. During such an audit, a program must do many of the same kinds of introspective tasks asked by this endorsement package. For example, an academic audit three years ago of one IPP began with the development of critical questions relating to our program that needed to be addressed. How much easier the writing of this document would have been had we completed an endorsement application first. Information gathered through the endorsement process will prove valuable when going through an audit process.

An end-product to be accomplished at some point will be the publication of a directory of IPP's including information based on the endorsement process. Potential students could use such a directory to locate programs which meet their needs. Programs could likewise use this directory in their own recruitment efforts. Probably the most obvious and the least concrete advantage is the alignment with standard practices in our field today. Each of us feels ethically responsible to do all that we can do to provide our students the best education we can give. Complying with the guidelines and standards of the endorsement package assures us of meeting the commitment.

Field-Testing the Interpreter Education Endorsement Process

Eve Dicker, Jona Maiorano, Marina L. McIntire, Linda Siple, Eve West,
Phyllis Wilcox, and Anna Witter-Merithew

NOTE: The Committee wishes to express its deep gratitude to the five programs and the nine raters who made great sacrifices on behalf of the advancement of this field.

I. INTRODUCTION

As we approach the change of century, the field of sign language interpretation and education is facing some facts -- both pleasant and unpleasant -- about ourselves. Approximately 75 programs teach sign language interpretation; they exist without the benefit of articulated or recognized standards for entrance into the world of work. The CIT/RID program assessment package addresses this problem and the critical need to bring interpreter preparation in the U.S. into line with other academic disciplines.

This report is offered to the members of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) as a summary of the activities and recommendations of the CIT/RID Ad Hoc Committee on Educational Standards. We have organized the paper into five parts: historical background, project goals and activities between 1989 and 1991, raters and programs in the field-test, what we have learned from grant-supported activities, and our recommendations for the future.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the 1960's, three trends or events took shape and have affected this project. First were the changes in the U.S. relating to general societal recognition of minority rights and honoring cultural diversity as a positive characteristic. By suggesting a different viewpoint of the Deaf experience, these sociopolitical changes have influenced and continue to influence D/deaf people's experience of society, as well as *vice versa*.

The second major event was Stokoe's (1960, 1965) ground-breaking claims regarding American Sign Language. For the first time in recent memory, American Sign Language was regarded as a fully-formed language that had a syntax, a morphology, its own "phonology" -- in short, a grammar. The impact of these claims were huge, indeed, and they continue to have an influence on the rising social conscience of the Deaf Community into the 1990's.

A third event was the establishment of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf in 1965. This was a first step towards the professionalization of the task of interpreting

between D/deaf and hearing people. Along with the RID, sign language classes and interpreting classes started to be offered in more formal settings than ever before, as colleges and universities began to recognize both linguistic claims about ASL and political claims regarding the rights of D/deaf people to equal access.

From these seeds came the roots of the present project. The RID grew from a "grassroots" organization into a professional association. Federal legislation (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and P.L. 94-142) put "teeth" into equal rights accessibility for D/deaf citizens. Both the hearing and the Deaf communities began to recognize the severe shortage of qualified interpreters. Federal funding supported ten centers for short-term education of interpreters and more programs appeared in a number of colleges and universities.

In 1978, the RID produced a first attempt at program standards. The RID at that time had already developed -- at least by implication -- a set of standards for quality in interpretation, through testing and certification. It was apparent, however, that new interpreters were not in general going to be able to meet this new standard. A few people recognized that standards were to be a critical part of interpreter education. Programs had sprung up without guidance or any agreed-upon entrance or exit criteria. The success of graduates was (and in large part remains) haphazard. Dick Dirst, Anna Witter-Merithew, and Theresa Smith formulated an initial set of standards for programs educating new sign language interpreters.

In 1979, through the efforts of two of the ten federally-funded programs, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) and the Technical-Vocational Institute (TVI), a conference of interpreter trainers took place at TVI, in St. Paul, and CIT was born. Jan Kanda was elected the first president. Almost immediately, the new organization identified program standards as a critical task for the CIT to address.

Through the 1980's, a variety of CIT and RID members took responsibility for defining and refining standards for the education of sign language interpreters. In 1981 and 1982, Mary Stotler developed a draft and circulated it among all CIT members. In 1983, Cathy Cogen was named chair of a joint CIT and RID Committee which would work on that draft and the comments. Committee members were Susan Arneson, Rick Hernandez, and Betty Colonomos.

In 1986, Marina McIntire assumed responsibility, for CIT, of the joint committee, along with Gary Mowl for RID. The Committee now included Arneson, Hernandez, Colonomos, and Witter-Merithew. This committee circulated a revised set of standards among fifteen selected individuals in the field, as well as the ten federally-funded programs. Incorporating all possible comments and criticisms, the Committee

recommended to the CIT Board at the 1986 meeting in Chevy Chase, MD, that they adopt the standards and carry out all necessary activities to enforce the standards. Both the CIT Board and the general CIT membership voted to endorse the package of standards and, by implication, to undertake to establish the standards as reality for the field. In early 1987, the RID Board voted to accept joint reponsibility with CIT for finding ways of making the program standards a reality. The CIT/RID Joint Committee on Educational Standards was established to proceed with the development of an endorsement process. The chair was Lindsay Antle and members included Phyllis Wilcox, Jona Maiorano, Jan Kanda, Charlotte Baker-Shenk, Linda Siple, and Eve Dicker.

From early on, it was clear that accreditation was the eventual goal for these activities. But it was equally clear that accreditation lay well beyond the capacity of CIT or RID to enforce. This was true for two basic reasons: finances made it impossible to consider; perhaps more importantly, we were only then coming to a clear set of standards. It would have been unfair and unreasonable at that time to articulate a "final" set of standards and requirements.

In 1988, Marina McIntire, Jan Kanda, and Charlotte Baker-Shenk collaborated on a proposal to the Department of Education, through FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education) to field-test the standards package. In 1989, CIT received FIPSE funds to proceed with the field-test and the present joint CIT/RID committee was established: Marina McIntire, Chair and Project Director, Anna Witter-Merithew, Linda Siple, Eve Dicker, Jona Maiorano, Phyllis Wilcox, and Eve West.

For the period of the field-test, the package was organized in the following format: programs were to be questioned and measured in the areas of institution, program, faculty and curriculum. Questions ranged from the global ("Include a budget for your program.") to the minute ("Indicate the number of audio tapes your program owns."). The application was intended to be thorough and examined virtually every aspect of the program, including community support, and graduate and student feedback.

III. THE GRANT: WHAT WE HAVE DONE

The FIPSE grant, awarded in 1989 for $65,694, has lasted for two years. The granting period ends October 15, 1991. In the two years, the CIT/RID Committee on Educational Standards had three primary responsibilities:

1. review and revise the CIT/RID Educational Standards Endorsement System package and prepare it for distribution during a field-test period;
2. conduct a field-test of the system and analyze and evaluate the results; and

3. report the results of the field-testing and make recommendations regarding implementation of the system to the boards and memberships of the CIT and RID.

In undertaking these tasks, we have produced succeeding revised versions of the package. While maintaining the spirit of the standards as approved in 1986, we have gone through several changes in how to measure a program's status against those standards. In preparing for the field-test, we had to select raters and field-test sites. We established the following criteria for selecting raters:

1. Raters must have been a member of RID for at least three years.
2. Raters must have been a member of CIT for at least three years.
3. Raters must have a Bachelor's degree.
4. Raters should have a Master's degree.
5. Raters should hold valid and current RID certification.
6. Raters must have at least three years programmatic and/or teaching experience in an interpreter preparation program at a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
7. Raters must submit: 1) one letter of recommendation from a colleague, attesting to their commitment to the goals of educational standards as established by this Committee, and 2) a current resumé.

We notified potential raters through announcements in the CIT and RID newsletters, and we sent personal letters to every member of CIT. Approximately twenty-five people submitted initial applications. These were screened and we sent a mini-case study for them to appraise. Eleven applicants completed an assessment of the imaginary institution, and based on that preliminary piece of work, the Committee selected nine people to be trained as raters. They are: Cathy Cogen (MA), Dr. Nancy Frishberg (CT); Sally Koziar (IL), Christine Monikowski (NM), Mary Mooney (TX), Pat Stawasz (CT), Laurie Swabey (MN), Betsy Winston (DC), and Dr. Sherman Wilcox (NM).

These raters came to CSUN for four days prior to the 1990 CIT convention and the Committee conducted rater training in how to use and apply the package standards and rating forms. For this event, the Committee developed a curriculum and produced three case study programs, including faculty and curriculum. As a result of the training, the raters offered valuable insights and comments on how to improve the scoring process and the application itself. Their scoring behaviors were assessed carefully, and all nine candidates passed the training.

In the meantime, the Committee also recruited field-test sites. Our criteria for these were:

1. Sites selected should represent a sampling of programs offered by institutions which offer Associate, Baccalureate or Master's degrees.

GUIDELINE: should be proportionate to the total number of degree-granting programs in the same category.

2. Program must have been established for a minimum of five academic years.
3. Program should have a minimum of thirty graduates to date.
4. Selected sites should represent both urban and rural locations.

GUIDELINE: target programs that will graduate individuals serving a predominantly rural or urban consumer base.

5. Selected sites represent a wide geographic distribution.

GUIDELINE: attempt to target at least one program on East Coast, West Coast, Southeast and Midwest.

6. Selected sites should serve D/deaf students on campus.
7. Selected sites must have at least one staff member with full-time faculty status.
8. Selected sites must have the capacity to produce a videotape of instructional activities occurring in the language lab and which address specific criteria.
9. Selected sites should include one program with an interpretation focus and one program with a transliteration focus.
10. Selected sites must submit five (5) letters of support from local organizations and agencies, college deans and administrators, faculty and students.

GUIDELINE: letters to reflect the cooperation between the program and the recommending entity, the commitment to support the endorsement process.

11. Selected sites must have a representative at the CIT Convention in Pomona, to participate in discussions related to the application process.
12. Selected sites will agree that data collected from the application process can be used to advance the field of interpreter education. (For example, data may be used in professional articles, reporting of research, the search for funds to continue the endorsement process, and other similar endeavors.)

Again, the Committee contacted programs through the CIT and RID newsletters. As well, we sent personal inquiries to all programs listed in the CIT Program Directory. Fourteen sites made an initial application and the Committee made its selections, aiming for some programmatic and geographic balance. The selected sites were:

1. Los Angeles Pierce College (Woodland Hills, CA)
2. National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Rochester, NY)
3. Northcentral Technical Institute (Waubonsee, WI)
4. Tulsa Junior College (Tulsa, OK)
5. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI)

Representatives from these sites participated in a group meeting during the 1990 CIT Convention where the details of the field test process were explained. Early in November, each program received a copy of the application materials to complete and return by the beginning of February.

IV. THE RATERS & THE PROGRAMS

The raters met over a long weekend in Washington, D.C., in March 1990. Having worked with two applications prior to arriving, they were to have made preliminary scoring decisions alone; they then worked together in teams, trying always to understand clearly what the standards intended and how they should be applied. Each rater also took a third program application home to score. These third scores served as Committee data for checking reliability among raters.

Raters' behaviors were extremely reliable in three areas: institution, program, and faculty. Curriculum scores, however, remained noticeably individualized and raters expressed their dissatisfaction with this particular section. Overall, the programs' experiences and raters' scoring confirmed our suspicions about a number of things. Among these were the generally poor status of programs' curricula, the relatively high standing of institutions, and that the package needed overhauling.

V. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

We have gathered comments, critique, and evaluations from several sources: the field-test sites, the raters (both formally and informally), and external consultants. The Committee has gleaned from these diverse perspectives several object lessons and have received inspiration for further revisions to the package and the process.

In terms of programs and the field in general, we have learned several things. First, programs are eager for this type of programmatic feedback. We experienced, for example, no difficulty in finding sites that were willing to participate in the initial trial of the package. Secondly, programs want varying levels of feedback. One dissatisfying, yet unsurprising aspect of this interest is that programs want to know whether they have "passed" the evaluation. Programs also, quite rightfully, want to know what will happen with the scoring information.

As to raters and the scoring process, many highly qualified people expressed interest in participating. The raters who completed training and participated in this field-test have addressed the task with a remarkable degree of integrity, commitment, and insight. The scoring process, on the other hand, has been structured in such a way that we find it difficult to interpret the data we collected in any meaningful way.

As a result, we have come to the observation that the standards, as they were stated, "over-articulate" the ideal we seek. This has led to a cumbersome system which did not always yield the desired data or information. We have, then to reviewed and then distinguished between the actual standards and items which would serve as indicators of those standards. In fact, we have taken a step back and made a distinction that has not been clear over the last few years -- between endorsement and program self-study. Obviously, the process has been evolving, and we foresee that it will continue to evolve. The standards reflect an ideal vision for the field. Such an ideal requires a transitional period in which we can manage the necessary growth and improvement.

VI. PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

While this transitional period will be one of painful growth, the process is a valuable one for the field, and our view is that it is imperative that we continue the experience. As a result of our work, we have made several recommendations to the CIT and RID Boards. First, we have suggested certain revisions to the application form and process:

- to eliminate the institution section and restrict our rating activities to institutions which have received regional accreditation;
- to re-organize the information into a more logical sequence;
- to condense the amount of information by utilizing a more generalized system of standards;
- to strengthen the student portfolio segment of the application by developing a systematic approach to gathering a standard set of data;
- to develop stimulus material for gathering information relating to student standards;
- to strengthen the use of graduate and student feedback by asking more explicit questions.

Second, we have suggested revisions to the rating system:

- to determine the function of the rating process and to assign either a descriptive or a numerical system, or some combination of the two in order to address this function;

- to re-train raters in the use of the new form and in assessing the new student portfolio;
- to develop a system of descriptors and narrative options which can be used to provide individual feedback in some standard format.

Third, we are seeking to facilitate the transition towards our idealized vision of the field. We wish to see the following take place:

- the publication of articles in various educational journals, seeking response from the broader academic community; these articles would be about the package and our experience with establishing standards;
- the development of a position paper on competency-based curriculum;
- the development of a model of the organization of curriculum, which would assist in programs' self-assessment process.

Finally, we have urged the Boards to plan for continued implementation of the package. We hope to see three sites go through self-study in 1992, six to ten in 1993, and six to ten more in 1994. We hope that the process will become self-supporting through the use of an "assessment fee." We have urged the Boards to establish management systems (policies and procedures, reporting mechanisms for any staff, and budgeting) to make the process as independent as possible.

We believe that the field is ready for programmatic self-assessment and will respond eagerly to this opportunity. Such a process will cost money and requires a plan. The Committee will prepare a five-year plan to leave in the hands of its successor Committee; such a plan should foster continuity and consistency in the evolution of this process.

The immediate prospect is one of "self-assessment" for programs, with the eventual long-term goal of accreditation. We know that articulated standards provide for more well-developed programs with coherent curricula. These in turn will mean quality control and more competent graduates to serve the communication needs in the Deaf Community for the century to come.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

_____

Application for Program Endorsement
Conference of Interpreter Trainers and
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

Applying Institution: _____

Program/Department Title: _____

Application Date: _____

Signatures:

_____
Academic Dean

_____
Department Chair

_____
Program Coordinator

Throughout this application form, you will find page references to the Guidelines and Standards document. These references should assist you in responding accurately and completely. All items have an impact on ratings. Please see Guidelines and Standards document for clarification. A description of the Student Portfolio requirement can be found on pages **XX** of the Guidelines and Standards document.

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE. Please submit five (5) complete copies of your application (excluding student evaluations and letters of support) in ring-binders or some other book-like format.

For assistance or more information please contact:

This project has been supported in part by the Education Department, Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. This support does not imply Education Department endorsement of any views or opinions expressed.

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PART I. Program Questionnaire

[See the Guidelines & Standards document for clarification.]

1a. Organizational structure: Please provide a diagram of the structure of the program, including departmental affiliations, position titles, and reporting hierarchy.

1b. Please include a copy of the program's philosophy or mission statement.

2. Number of program faculty and staff involved with interpreter education:

Administrative: _____ full-time _____ part-time

Teaching [Deaf]: ____ full-time ____ part-time ____ adjunct ____ visiting

How many are tenured? _____ How many have tenure-line appointments? _____

Teaching [hearing]: ____ full-time ____ part-time ____ adjunct ____ visiting

How many are tenured? _____ How many have tenure-line appointments? _____

Secretarial: _____ full-time _____ part-time _____ work/study

Professional/Support Staff: _____ full-time _____ part-time

3a. Please mark the following questions with a yes or no. You will need to add some explanatory remarks or additional details regarding many of the following responses. Please append these in narrative form; where appropriate, enclose relevant catalogue copy, clearly marked.

a. _____ Does class size ever exceed ten students to one instructor [lab/skills courses]?

b. _____ Does class size ever exceed fifteen students to one instructor [lecture courses]?

c. _____ Does the program provide remedial instruction in ASL and in English? Please describe briefly.

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3b. Please describe the amount and availability of each of the following support facilities:

a. laboratory facilities

1. Does your program have a laboratory component in which students can work?
2. Can students use this lab on their own time?
3. Is videotape equipment accessible to students in the lab?
4. Briefly describe your laboratory facilities, including schedule and staffing.

b. equipment, materials and media.

___ Audio tape recorders
___ Headphones
___ Video tape recorders
___ Production quality television cameras
___ Slow-motion playback equipment
___ Video dubbing equipment
___ VCR monitors
___ Video editing facilities

c. instructional materials

1. How many videotapes and audio tapes does your program have?
2. How many of these are "homemade"?
3. How many are commercially produced?
4. Of the total number owned, how many have you used in the classroom in the past year?
5. Do you have sufficient videotapes and audio tapes to support your curricular objectives?
6. What new videotapes and audio tapes has your program purchased in the last two years?
7. What new equipment has your program purchased in the last two years?

4. Please describe the amount and availability of each of the following support facilities:

a. Secretarial and office support

1. Do you have a full-time secretary? part-time? work-study?
2. Do you share departmental office staff?
3. How many hours of secretarial assistance per week?
4. How many typewriters and word processors are available and on what basis?

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5. **[Needs attention! see standards]**
Entrance requirements. (Be sure to enclose appropriate catalogue copy.)

a. _____ Are all program applicants required to hold a high school diploma or GED equivalent?

b. _____ Are all program applicants required to demonstrate a specified level of English competency upon entrance?

c. _____ Are all program applicants required to demonstrate at least minimal abilities in signed language?

6. Total number of minority students accepted and entering: _____]
[Optional: Total number minority students currently enrolled: _____]
[Optional: Total number and percentage of (entering) minority students to graduate or complete program:
Graduating: Number: _____ Percentage: _____
Completing, but not graduating: Number: ____ Percentage: _____]

7. **[Needs attention! see standards]**
Exit requirements (Be sure to enclose appropriate catalogue copy.)

a. _____ Are all candidates for graduation required to demonstrate a standard level of English competency?

e. _____ Are all candidates for graduation required to demonstrate a standard level of signed language competency?

f. _____ Are all candidates for graduation required to demonstrate a standard level of competency in either interpretation or transliteration or both?

g. _____ **[For four-year institutions]** Are all applicants required to demonstrate SAT (or other standardized test) scores at or above a certain level?

h. _____ **[For four-year institutions]** Are applicants required to have a minimum high school grade point average?

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9a. Please provide a description of how the program (students and faculty) interacts with the deaf community and professional organizations and agencies serving the deaf population of your locale and your campus.

9b. What is the estimated deaf population in your local community? ____ Of the campus? ___
State sources of data _____

_____

_____

10. ___ Does the program have an advisory committee? (If yes, please describe the composition of this committee.)

11. Percentage of graduates who, in the last three years, have achieved:

a. _____ some level of national (RID) certification

b. _____ percentage of graduates who to date have passed the RID written evaluation (since 1989)

c. _____ some level of state QA or other agency assessment

12. Percentage of graduates to seek and find employment related to major:

_____ full-time _____ part-time

13. Please provide a description of the sequence of study (a course mask).
PLEASE NOTE: a model sequence of study is enclosed.

14. Please provide a detailed description of the practicum/internship experiences provided to students.

15. Please provide us with the names and addresses of fifteen students currently enrolled in your program and fifteen recent graduates (within the last five years). We will contact them independently for their contribution to the process. Thank you.

16. Please provide us with five letters of support for your program.

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PART III. **Faculty Questionnaire. (25 per cent)

[See pp. 18 - 19 of the Guidelines & Standards document for clarification.]

(Please duplicate this two-page form for each faculty member to complete; all faculty should alsosubmit a current vita.
We have attached a model for formatting vitae.)

*NAME, TITLE AND RANK

_____

_____

*FACULTY STATUS

Full-time _____ Tenure-line appointment _____ Tenured _____

Part-time _____ Number of hours/week _____

*EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

B.A./B.S. University: _____

Academic major: _____

Date graduated: _____

M.A./M.S./M.Ed. University: _____

Academic major: _____

Date graduated: _____

Ph.D./Ed.D. University: _____

Academic major: _____

Date graduated: _____

*EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Number of years teaching in this program: _____

Total years experience as an educator of interpreters: _____

Total years of experience as an interpreter: _____

Number of hours currently interpreting per month: _____

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***PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS**

Type: _____

Date of issuance: _____

Type: _____

Date of issuance: _____

Type: _____

Date of issuance: _____

Type: _____

Date of issuance: _____

***PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS (check all that apply)**

_____ Conference of Interpreter Trainers

_____ Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

_____ Other _____

_____ Other _____

_____ Other _____

***TEACHING LOAD OVER THE LAST THREE (3) YEARS: [include course numbers, course titles, and number of credit hours for each term.]**

Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

course number and title: _____

number of credit hours: _____

Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____

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course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____

Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
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Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
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course number and title: _____
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course number and title: _____
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course number and title: _____
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Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
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number of credit hours: _____

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Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____

Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____

Term: _____ Total number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____
course number and title: _____
number of credit hours: _____

Average number of credit hours per term over the last three years: _____

Please note: In some cases, courses listed below in the curriculum section may have been taught by instructors who are no longer affiliated with your program, and their vitae are not included in this response package. If this is the case, please fill out a copy of these pages **(XX)** in the application form as best you can for them, and include the most current copy of the vitae that you hold in your files.

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SAMPLE STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

DATE

9420 Reseda Blvd., #212
Northridge, CA 91324

Dear Colleague:

A joint committee of CIT and RID is conducting a field-test of a program assessment package which establishes national standards for interpreter education programs. The committee has determined that one way in which we can validate our results is by expanding our inquiry to a larger group of students and recent graduates of the programs in our field-test. We are asking about your perceptions of one of the programs in question. (When the assessment process has been established, we will continue to use a similar student/graduate question- naire.)

To help us confirm results we will obtain from field-test programs about their curriculum, faculty, institutional facilities and program makeup, we would appreciate your prompt and thoughtful completion of the enclosed forms. We can assure you that your comments will be kept in strictest confidence, and so we request your absolute and complete honesty in responding. We recognize that participation in this activity requires much thought and care; as an expression of our gratitude to you for your help, upon receipt of your completed questionnaire, we will provide you with a one-year associate membership in CIT.

Your participation will assist us in the improvement of preparation for future interpreters and we hope you will agree to participate. We have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your convenience. If you have any questions about the procedure or about the assessment, please feel free to contact our project director, Marina L. McIntire, 9420 Reseda Blvd., #212, Northridge, CA 91324; 818/349-2726tty/v.

Sincerely,

enclosure

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Thank you for helping us in this project. Please answer every question as honestly and thoughtfully as possible. Your identity will be kept confidential and your comments will allow CIT and RID to provide a comprehensive and effective national program assessment that will benefit the field immensely.

1. Name of program attended _____

2. Period of time attended _____

3. Did you complete the program? ____ yes _____ no

4. Date and type of credential you did or will receive?

____ certificate of completion _____ A.A./A.A.S. diploma ____ B.A./B.S. diploma

5. Are you a member of national RID? __ yes ___ no; a regional chapter? __ yes __ no

6. Do you currently work as an interpreter? _____ yes _____ no

If yes, please continue with #7. If no, please skip to question # 9

7. What sorts of interpreting settings have you worked in? (please check all that are applicable)

____ educational (pre-college) ____ educational (post-secondary)

____ social service ____ medical

____ legal ____ religious

____ platform ____ performing arts

____ other (Please specify as closely as possible): _____

_____

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8. Now, please go through the same list and tell us roughly the proportion of your interpreting work has taken place in each type of setting:

____ educational (pre-college) ____ educational (post-secondary)

____ social service ____ medical

____ legal ____ religious

____ platform ____ performing arts

____ other (Please specify as closely as possible.): _____

_____

9. Have you attempted RID certification? ____ yes ____ no

10. Are you certified by RID? ___ yes ___ no If yes, which certificate do you hold? ____

If yes, please skip to # 13.

11. Have you begun the RID certification process? _____ yes _____ no

12. Have you passed the written portion of the RID evaluation? _____ yes _____ no

13. Have you been assessed by some other agency (such as a state QA program)?

____ yes ____ no

Results: _____

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14. Please describe the ways in which you feel the program you attended successfully prepared you for interpreting:

15. Please describe the ways in which you feel the program you attended failed in their attempts to prepare you for interpreting:

16. Please tell us what you think about the qualifications of the faculty in the program you attended{that is, their teaching ability and background}:

17. Please tell us what the faculty and administration could do to make the program you attended a better (even better) program:

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If you answered "yes" to question #6 (currently work as an interpreter), please continue. If you do not currently work as an interpreter, and if you feel you cannot answer adequately, you may skip to question #22.

18. Did the program prepare you realistically for interpreting? That is, did they inform you honestly about pay scales, job opportunities, health risks, ethical concerns and the like?

_____ yes _____ no

19. Please specify ways in which the program could have accomplished this more successfully:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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20. Did your experience in the program prepare you adequately about professional contacts within the Deaf Community? _____ yes _____ no

21. Please specify ways in which the program might have accomplished this more successfully:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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If you answered "yes" to question #6 (currently work as an interpreter), please skip to page 7. If you answered "no" and you do not currently work as an interpreter, please continue.

22. Why are you not currently working as an interpreter? (Check as many as are appropriate, and please feel free to expand on your answers below.)

____ lack of job opportunities ____ low pay

____ medical problems ____ found I don't like interpreting

____ other

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

23. Please tell us what the program or faculty might have done that would have made a difference for you. For example, they might have required stronger language skills, counseled you out earlier, maintained higher or lower standards.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Please assess the program as you experienced it in regard to the following issues. Circle the number that most closely represents your view of the program, faculty, or the institution you attended.

(3 = ideal, hard to improve; 2 = good; 1 = adequate; 0 = non-existent/totally inadequate.)

3	2	1	0	Program had a variety of media equipment/facilities
3	2	1	0	The program/institution had adequate, varied library facilities
3	2	1	0	Program offered regular, thorough assessments of my skills
3	2	1	0	Class size was usually fifteen students or fewer
3	2	1	0	The program offered remedial instruction in English
3	2	1	0	The program offered remedial instruction in ASL
3	2	1	0	The program taught skills in interpretation (ASL/English)
3	2	1	0	The program taught skills in transliteration (signed English/English)
3	2	1	0	The program taught skills in oral transmission (visible English/English)
3	2	1	0	The program taught skills in tactile transmission (for deaf/blind clients)
3	2	1	0	The program required signing skills for entrance into the major
3	2	1	0	The faculty were well-prepared and well-informed about current issues in interpretation
3	2	1	0	The faculty were excellent teachers and displayed genuine concern for student success
3	2	1	0	The practicum experience was well-supervised and gave a realistic experience of "real life"
3	2	1	0	Classes were scheduled conveniently for working students
3	2	1	0	Financial assistance was available through the institution
3	2	1	0	The program encouraged and provided for Deaf Community contacts
3	2	1	0	The school I attended had deaf students enrolled

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The program included adequate information about or whole courses devoted to the following:

(3 = ideal, hard to improve; 2 = good; 1 = adequate; 0 = non-existent/totally inadequate.)

3	2	1	0	Theories of interpretation/transliteration
3	2	1	0	History and issues in interpretation/transliteration
3	2	1	0	Professional ethics
3	2	1	0	Deaf culture
3	2	1	0	The RID evaluation process
3	2	1	0	Community resources and referral sources
3	2	1	0	Linguistics -- ASL
3	2	1	0	Linguistics -- English
3	2	1	0	Business practices for interpreters
3	2	1	0	Interpersonal relations
3	2	1	0	Sensitivity to clients
3	2	1	0	Language variation/sociolinguistics
3	2	1	0	Minority group dynamics
3	2	1	0	Cross-cultural communication and conflict
3	2	1	0	Advanced vocabulary/grammar development -- English
3	2	1	0	Advanced vocabulary/grammar development -- ASL
3	2	1	0	Skills development in interpretation
3	2	1	0	Skills development in transliteration
3	2	1	0	Practice in consecutive and simultaneous transmission
3	2	1	0	Non-verbal communication
3	2	1	0	Stress management and personal health
3	2	1	0	Public speaking

Thank you for your assistance. Please be sure to fill out the last page and include it. We will need your name and address in order to send you your CIT Newsletter. All responses will be kept in the strictest confidence.

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My age: 18 - 25 25 - 35 35 - 50 over 50 My gender: Male Female

My highest degree:

HS diploma A.A./A.A.S. B.A./B.S. M.A./M.Ed./M.S. Ph.D./Ed.D.

Minority or disability status (optional): _____

My address: _____

_____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please print your name here: _____

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CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS

You may wish to date and initial each of these steps as you do them, to help keep things straight.

Have you:

____ filled out the cover page of the application, including date received and all signatures

____ either sent the names and addresses of fifteen students currently enrolled in your program and fifteen recent graduates (within the last five years) or (if your school's policy forbids this) received thirty pre-assembled letters and student questionnaires from the project director and sent them out yourselves (page **X**) [should be done by **XX**]

____ solicited five letters of support to be sent directly to the project director, ensuring that the required categories are covered (page **X**; page **X** of Guidelines & Standards document)

____ converted all faculty vitae to standard format (page **X**, plus model format)

____ converted all course work to standard format (page **X**, plus model format)

____ enclosed a program budget (page **X**)

____ filled out each page of the application

____ enclosed a student portfolio (see pages **X** of Guidelines and Standards)

____ checked to make sure that all enclosed catalogue copy has been clearly marked to indicate which item it relates to

____ organized five completed copies of the application in ring binders or other book-like format

____ added any narrative which will assist the raters in obtaining an accurate and complete view of the program

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Programmatic Standards

1. The program shall reflect a cultural identification with deafness.

Indicators:

_____ The department is structurally affiliated with foreign languages, the humanities, or the social sciences.

_____ The mission or philosophy statement reflects a cultural approach to deafness and to educating interpreters.

_____ The mission or philosophy statement coherently states a reasonable set of goals.

_____ At least **20%** of the faculty are D/deaf.

_____ The program recognizes the status of American Sign Language as a language, complete and independent from English.

_____ The D/deaf faculty have access to interpreting services, TTY's, and visual alarms and signals.

2. The program shall demonstrate stability and consistency with regards to its faculty and resources.

Indicators:

_____ At least **75%** of all the faculty have tenure-line appointments.

_____ At least **50%** of all the faculty have tenure.

_____ At least **50%** of the D/deaf faculty members are in tenure-line appointments or have tenure.

_____ The program has at least two (2) full-time faculty members.

_____ The program's budget demonstrates full institutional support.

_____ The program has sufficient clerical support.

_____ At least **50%** of the faculty have been teaching in the program for at least three years.

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3. The program shall have established entrance requirements to ensure that students possess the pre-requisites for potential success in the program.

Indicators:

_____ Applicants must hold a high school diploma or GED equivalent.

_____ Applicants must demonstrate abilities at or above a stated level in the English language.

_____ Applicants must demonstrate abilities at or above a stated level in American Sign Language.

_____ **[4 yr College or University only]** Applicants must demonstrate SAT (or some other standardized evaluation instrument) scores at or above a stated level.

4. The program shall provide a learning environment which is student-centered.

Indicators:

_____ The faculty-to-student ratio does not exceed 1:10 for skills and laboratory courses.

_____ The faculty-to-student ratio does not exceed 1:15 for lecture and theory courses.

_____ The program provides access to laboratory facilities that facilitate independent learning.

_____ The program provides access to relevant printed materials to supplement the students' learning.

_____ The program provides access to ample relevant audio and video materials to supplement the students' learning.

_____ The program has access to or provide remedial instruction for borderline students in English and ASL.

_____ The program has exclusive use of one or more classrooms.

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5. The students shall be culturally diverse so that they gain a multi-cultural perspective; the program shall ensure that graduates of the program are also culturally diverse.

Indicators:

_____ The program has a formalized plan to recruit minority students and can demonstrate their success in applying the plan.

_____ In the last three years the program has graduated male students.

_____ In the last three years the program has graduated Black students.

_____ In the last three years the program has graduated Hispanic students.

_____ In the last three years the program has graduated other minority students.

6. The program shall have established exit requirements that ensure that students possess the necessary skills for potential success in the field.

Indicators:

_____ Requisite to graduation, students must demonstrate a stated level of ability in the English language.

_____ Requisite to graduation, students must demonstrate a stated level of ability in American Sign Language.

_____ Requisite to graduation, students must demonstrate a stated level of ability in interpretation.

and/or (depending on program focus)

_____ Requisite to graduation, the student must demonstrate a stated level of ability in transliteration.

_____ At least **50%** of students entering the program complete the program.

_____ **[4 yr College or University only]** Graduates receive a bachelor's degree.

_____ **[2 yr School]** Graduates receive an Associate's degree.

7. Graduates shall demonstrate their commitment to the profession and to life-long learning.

Indicators:

_____ **Eighty per cent** of those seeking employment in the field of interpreting have secured a position.

_____ Over the last 3-5 years at least **60%** of the graduates have begun the certification process (taken and passed the written RID test).

8. The program shall demonstrate an ongoing relationship with the Deaf community.

Indicators:

_____ The campus and surrounding community includes a reasonable number of D/deaf people.

_____ Students and faculty are actively involved with local, state and national D/deaf organizations.

_____ The program has an advisory committee which includes members of the local Deaf community.

9. The program shall demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the profession of Sign Language interpretation.

Indicators:

_____ The campus and surrounding community includes a reasonable number of professional interpreters.

_____ The students and faculty are actively involved with local, state and national organizations for professional Sign Language interpreters and interpreter educators.

_____ The program has an advisory committee which includes members of the local interpreting community.

10. The faculty shall have appropriate and relevant educational backgrounds.

Indicators:

_____ Faculty members hold degrees in relevant academic majors, such as interpretation and translation, American Sign Language, linguistics, anthrolopology, sociology, special majors focusing on ASL and/or interpretation and translation, or education.

_____ Faculty backgrounds and experience, on the whole, represent a balanced set of views and biases.

_____ Faculty in two-year institutions hold M.A., M.S., or M.Ed. degrees.

_____ Faculty in four-year colleges and universities hold Ph.D. or Ed.D. degrees.

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11. The faculty shall have appropriate and relevant professional experience and qualifications.

_____ Faculty hold current full certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RSC, CSC, CI, or CT).

_____ Faculty maintain active membership in CIT.

_____ Full-time faculty continue to interpret at least five, but no more than fourteen hours per month.

_____ Part-time faculty continue to interpret at least five hours per month.

12. The faculty shall possess formal preparation for the courses which they are teaching and shall actively engage in their own continuing education.

_____ In the last 3 - 5 years, faculty have regularly attended local, state-level, national, and/or international meetings, conventions, and symposia relevant to the field of interpreter education.

_____ In the last 3 - 5 years, faculty have published papers and/or articles in journals relevant to the field of interpreter education.

_____ In the last 5 - 10 years, faculty have actively participated in collegial life through official responsibilities in local, state and national organizations for professional Sign Language interpreters and interpreter educators.

_____ **[Four-year college or university]** In the last 3 years, faculty have taught an average of no more than 12 contact hours per semester or 9 contact hours per quarter.

_____ **[Two-year college or university]** In the last 3 years, faculty have taught an average of no more than 15 contact hours per semester or 12 contact hours per quarter.

_____ Faculty teach courses for which they have academic preparation.

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Recommended Standards for the Curriculum Section of the CIT/RID Educational Standards Rating System

The field testing has revealed the following issues relating to the curriculum section of the application and the rating process.

§ It was difficult to retrieve a program's curriculum in an organized and cohesive manner or to gain a sense of the overall logic and philosophy associated with each program.

§ Standards as written did not elicit an appropriate overview of the curriculum and focussed on too many specific details unrelated to the overall interests of the field.

§ The questions in the previous application materials did not elicit the desired information and needed to be adjusted to reflect a more holistic approach to the application process.

§ Standards as written confused both standards and procedures; they needed to be redesigned to reflect broader-based statements incorporating current theories and goals of the field.

As a result of these findings, committee members have rewritten the standards for the curriculum section and produced five broad curriculum standards.

1. The curriculum shall prepare students with the bilingual and bicultural competence necessary to accommodate sociolinguisitic diversity within the deaf community.

Indicators: [course content in the following areas]

_____ Advanced ASL vocabulary and grammar development
_____ Advanced English vocabulary and grammar development
_____ Linguistics of ASL
_____ Linguistics of English
_____ Language variation (sociolinguistics)
_____ Deaf culture
_____ American culture
_____ Minority group dynamics
_____ Cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural conflict

2. The curriculum shall conform to standards of competency-based education and provide students with frequent and on-going diagnostic feedback, which is integrated into an individualized plan for skills development.

Indicators:

_____ Instructional strategies
_____ Course evaluations related to the course behavioral objectives (to be taken from the competency-based curriculum paper)

3. The curriculum shall promote interaction** between students and the Deaf Community, using Padden's (1980) model of the Deaf Community.

Indicators:

_____ Use of guest lecturers, panels, and visitors from the Deaf Community

_____ Student involvement in social events in the Deaf Community

_____ Students encouraged to participate in non-school-sponsored social, professional and recreational functions offered on the local, state, and national level

_____ Practicum experiences

_____ Videotape library bibliography

** If this interaction is not reflected in your course outlines, please explain briefly how interaction is fostered.

4. The curriculm shall foster the pursuit of life-long learning.

Indicators:

_____ Introductory information about professional organizations

_____ Announcements of available workshops

_____ Students' names on the mailing list of various organizations (i.e., regional interpreter training programs)

_____ Students encouraged to participate in events on the local, state and national level

_____ Mailing newsletters to graduates

_____ RID evaluation process

5. The curriculum shall integrate contemporary theory, practice, language skills and experiential learning components in a developmentally cohesive manner.**

Indicators: [course content in the following areas]

_____ History and issues in interpretation and transliteration
_____ Theories of interpretation and transliteration
_____ Skills development in interpretation
_____ Skills development in transliteration
_____ Specialized areas of interpretation and transliteration
_____ Practice in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting
_____ Professional ethics

** Please include a course sequence (course mask) and briefly discuss the rationale of the sequence.

6. The curriculum shall provide human service and leadership skills.

Indicators: [course content in the following areas]

_____ Community resources and referral sources
_____ Business practices for interpreters
_____ Interpersonal relations
_____ Sensitivity to clients
_____ Public relations
_____ Public speaking
_____ Stress management and personal health
_____ Leadership skills

** Indicates notes that need to be made in the working draft.

STUDENT PORTFOLIO

The purpose of the student portfolio is to elicit a sampling of student performance abilities and to measure how these relate to programmatic goals and curriculum sequence. The portfolio will indicate how effectively students are acquiring competence in interpretation and/or transliteration, and whether their knowledge base reflects an understanding of contemporary theories of the field. Each program will submit (a minimum of) three (3) student portfolios, representing one student for each of three categories of performance: superior (A), above average (B), below standard/average (C-D).

PROCESS:

1. CIT will provide each program with the stimulus material to be used for eliciting a sample of student performance. The stimulus material will include instructions for completing the taping process, and an overview of the content material for student review and preparation.

2. The program will select three students, representing three distinct levels of performance, to generate a sample of work. Students will provide an unrehearsed sample of their work in accordance with instructions.

3. Students will also generate the following information at the conclusion of their work sample:

- a biographical sketch, presented in sign language, which provides the student's name, length of time and experience with sign language, status in the program, and relationships with the Deaf community;
- a personal statement presented in sign language which reflects the student's views of interpreting, professional goals, and challenges confronting students of interpretation.

The bio and personal statement should not exceed twenty minutes and should be generated exclusively by the student.

4. The program should submit summary background information to accompany each student portfolio which includes the students name, status in the program, summary of performance and other relevant information.

THE PREPARATION OF INTERPRETERS: AN INTRODUCTION TO COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

Anna Witter-Merithew

Adapted from, "The preparation of interpreters to work in the American judicial system: An introduction to competency-based education," Anna Witter-Merithew. CSUN: Northridge, CA. 1991.

The value of any curriculum document depends on the theoretical foundation on which the curriculum is based and on the potential for this foundation to be translated into the practical application of skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for students of a given subject matter. The theoretical foundation for our approach to curriculum is drawn from the contemporary works of theorists who recognize Sign Language interpretation as a serialized process, requiring complex cognitive skills and processing with a pre-requisite of bilingual/bicultural competence. This underlying theory is supported by the research of, among others, Cokely (1984, 1988), Ingram (1988), and Isham (1991).

The primary goals of a competency-based education are two-fold: first, to identify all the skills, attitudes, and knowledge a learner needs to master in order to perform life and work tasks successfully, and second, to provide a learning environment that empowers learners to practice, acquire, and master these required competencies. Using a proficiency-oriented approach to education, programs seek to prepare learners to integrate their competencies into the daily process of living and working. Competency-based education is best identified for its practical, experiential, and holistic approach to learning, which encourages and accommodates individual learning styles. Mastery of required competencies is the goal and the curriculum provides for mastery to be achieved through a variety of learning experiences.

A few basic principles of competency-based education are: the skills and knowledge to be learned are clearly identified; the learners are aware of what is to be learned; and a learning environment exists which empowers students to learn. In

other words, the program must meet the needs of students; students are not expected to meet the needs of the program.

The following list provides a framework for competency-based education and how it creates an environment for learning:

1. ***It requires a substantial experiential component.*** Most people learn best with hands-on activity. In fact, most people learn best if this method is a major focus of their instructional program. If learners actively engage in something they enjoy, and which has a meaningful goal related to their work, motivation will increase and learning will be enhanced. Learners must have the opportunity to experiment with new knowledge and skills in a safe and creative environment where dignity in risk is emphasised and experienced (Brolin, 1989).

2. ***It provides for frequent self, peer and instructor feedback and review.*** When acquiring and mastering new skills and knowledge, students need ample opportunity to receive feedback and assessment of performance. The value of feedback is that it is frequent, specific, observable, and diagnostic in scope. In order for this to be achieved, most feedback should occur in learning situations that do not involve a performance ranking or score. Proficiency testing should be a regular part of the learning process, but should be distinguished from on-going diagnostic feedback that encourages risk and continued experimentation with new skills (Curwin, 1975).

3. ***It requires a substantial application component.*** Many learning experiences involve the acquisition of a theory base, but limited opportunity to practice skills and knowledge in the classroom setting. Often, there is no opportunity to make the transition from the classroom into the world of work. A competency-based curriculum encourages the mastery of skills and requires that knowledge be demonstrated in "real-world" settings over a period of time. This usually means that there is a strong practicum component woven into the curriculum. Practicum work must be supervised and reviewed. The learners receive immediate feedback and an immediate opportunity to integrate feedback into their work (Brolin, 1989).

4. ***It views all learning as an infusion process.*** Most educational programs are segmented into courses, or units of learning that may or may not be interrelated. In this respect, the relationship and synthesis of pieces of information and various acquired skills is left to the learners' imagination. A competency-based curriculum approach requires that the whole be determined and then infused into each aspect of the learning experience. This means that each instructional event requires an examination of how it relates to the whole of what is to be learned and allows for an infusion of concepts, ideas and skills. It also promotes and encourages the integration and synthesis of new information with existing knowledge and skills. In this respect, it can be viewed as a "building-block" approach. The foundation for the building rests in the accumulated experiential base already in the possession of each student. All new learning experiences are viewed as an addition to the pre-existing foundation (Brolin, 1989).

5. ***It promotes a thorough integration of emotional, intellectual and behavioral learning, with no one emphasized at the expense of the others.*** During the last decade and a half, there has been a shift from a structured, cognitive, scientific, behavioral approach to learning over to an educational approach which promotes identity, meaning, authenticity, connectedness, and values. This movement recognizes that in order for learners to approach learning as a life-long process, they must learn to think, analyze, create, and synthesize. Consequently, a competency-based curriculum approach identifies and incorporates those skills and areas of knowledge which are central and critical to a learner's everyday life and work, and requires the learner to challenge, re-think, extend, and expand their current base of knowledge and skill (Curwin, 1975).

6. ***It is designed to recognize and accommodate learning as an individualized process.*** The goals and objectives of the program and/or curriculum must be congruent with learners' personal and professional needs. Learners should experience greater movement towards the liberation of their individual style, rather than toward domestication into pre-established norms and standards. The curriculum should mutually enhance the growth of all learners and not result in anyone's personal growth at the expense of someone else's. Upon conclusion of the learning experience, learners should have extended and expanded choices for responding to their world (Curwin, 1975).

7. ***It determines mastery based on realistic and practical standards of performance and approaches testing in a fair and equitable manner.*** Testing is an intregal part of competency-based education. Testing approaches are clearly defined, using realistic and practical standards of performance which empower the student to demonstrate their highest level of proficiency. The skills and knowledge tested should be specific to the learners' experiences, yet provide the opportunity for them to demonstrate expanded and extended options for handling the test materials (Curwin, 1975).

8. ***It requires the program to work closely with the community and other available resources.*** An effective competency-based educational system promotes a partnership among learners, community, professionals with whom the learners will perform their work, and the consumers who can expect to benefit from their work. The partnership approach brings about more awareness and support of the program's goals and objectives. It also promotes learning which extends beyond the traditional "classroom" setting (Brolin, 1989)

9. ***It encourages educators to share what they are doing with their colleagues and community representatives.*** Competency-based curriculum requires a strong experiential and application component. This means that learners need to be integrated into the "real" world of work and to receive support and encouragement for this critical portion of the learning experience. This can only be achieved through a cooperative spirit and a willingness to be open and flexible while listening to others' opinions (Brolin, 1989).

Any discussion of curriculum will be enhanced by identifying the assumptions that exist and influence the overall organization, development, and sequence of learning. The University of New Brunswick Sign Language Interpreter Training Curriculum (Cokely 1980), and the Western Maryland Teaching Interpreting Curriculum (Baker-Shenk 1987), can serve as models for the development process.

Seven basic assumptions exist within the curriculum frame of the CIT/RID Program Assessment package:

1. The goal of interpretation is to convey a culturally and linguistically accurate message originated in one language into another language.

2. Accuracy of interpretation can only be achieved when the interpreter possesses bi-lingual and bi-cultural competence and approaches interpretation as a sophisticated cognitive process.

3. Due to the potentially severe personal and/or financial consequences and the status of cultural minorities in the United States, competence is a pre-requisite to interpreting professionally.

4. The cognitive processes associated with simultaneous and consecutive interpretation are essentially the same (with the exception of the amount of time used for processing), regardless of the setting/situation or the type of discourse to be interpreted (Cokely, 1988).

5. Interpretation errors can be isolated, identified, and minimized through established diagnostic processes and additional learning and skill mastery.

6. Sufficient knowledge of spoken and written language and the way it differs from conversational language use is a pre-requisite to determining the meaning of language generated within conversational and other discourse settings.

7. Mastery of bilingual, bicultural interpretation competence requires a commitment to continuing education and an on-going synthesis of current literature and practices related to interpretation.

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